

Please replace paragraphs 00040, 00041, and 00042 beginning at page 8, line 18, with the following new paragraphs:

[00040] In addition to the arcuate support surface 36 of the support member 27 of each cutter link 22 for supporting the cutting members 20, some cutting links further comprise an additional attachment such as a drag plate 70 in a manner and for a purpose yet to be described. In the preferred embodiments illustrated in FIGS. 1-5 and FIG. 16, the cutting chain 16 of the present invention preferably comprises at least one drag plate 70, and alternatively may comprise a plurality of drag plates 70. For example, every other cutter link 22 in the cutting chain 16 may support a drag plate 70 as illustrated in FIGS. 1-4 and FIG. 16, or the drag plate may be attached to the outer surface of the support member 27 of each cutter link 22.

[00041] With continued reference to FIG. 5, the drag plate 70 preferably, is made from a hard alloy such as steel. However, any other metal capable of withstanding the harsh weather conditions and trenching through varied soil materials may be used without departing from the scope of the invention. The drag plate 70 comprises an upper portion 72 and a pair of side portions 74 extending downwardly from the upper portion. The upper portion 72 has an arcuate upper edge 76 fixedly attached to the convex outer surface of the support member 27. The side portions 74 (only one shown in FIG. 5) of the drag plate 70 extend downwardly and outwardly and can be supported by the side plates 26, such as by a welded attachment thereto, for a purpose yet to be discussed.

[00042] With reference to FIGS. 12-15, there are shown therein different views of a preferred embodiment of the drag plate 70 of FIGS. 1-5 and FIG. 16 constructed in accordance with the present invention. The drag plate 70 comprises a central opening 80 that receivingly engages the cutter link 22 (see FIG. 5), to permit attachment thereto. The drag plate 70 is attached to the support member 27 such as by welding along a surface 82 that provides a substantially closely fitting relationship with the side plates 26 and the convex outer surface of

the arcuate support surface 36. However, any other mode of attachment that permits the drag plate 70 to be closely and fixedly attached to the support member 27 may be used. Alternatively, the drag plate 70 may be removably attached to the support member 27 without departing from the scope of the invention.